A PLEASING DECEPTION.

Happily it is not often that title-l women find themselves in such straits as was Lady Marion Grant on the death of her father. She was barely 19, and the Earl left her penniless, having lost his whole fortune gambling at Monte Carlo.

He had quarreled with every member of his family; he had changed his name, and, in selfish anger, had refused to tell even his only child what his true name was.

That he was a peer, he admitted, that she was entitled to the prefix of "Lady" he allowed, but she knew that Grant was not her real name, nor did her father leave any papers that enlightened her on the subject of her birthright.

There she was, a girl with few kind friends, who knew her as Miss Grant, and were ready to give her a home till after she had recovered from the first shock of her grief; but then she must go out into the world and find for herself.

One thing at least her father had done for his motherless child, he had given her an excellent education. She could speak four languages, sing, play both the piano and violin, and was, besides, thoroughly well read.

Mrs. Harmon, the kind friend at whose house she was staying, strongly advised her to answer any likely advertisements for a finished governess for girls, though, as she said to her husband, her very youth and beauty would go against her obtaining such a post.

Every morning the girl would anxiously scan the papers, but she found that when she applied in person for an engagement her youth was always against her.

Well, something must be done, so she resolved to assume a middle-aged appearance, and persuaded her friend to lend her some money to buy a brown wig, in which streaks of gray hair were discernable. This, with the addition of a pair of spectacles, immediately put quite 20 years on to her age, and in this disguise she sallied forth one morning in answer to a letter requesting her to call and see Lady Worthampton in person.

Terribly nervous, lest her trick should be discovered, and at the same time feeling like a child playing a practical joke, Miss Grant rang the bell of one of the houses in Park lane.

It was immediately opened by the footman, who informed the butler that it was another lady come to see her ladyship about the situation of governess. Marion was at once conducted to the boudoir, where Lady Worthampton was writing.

A tall, beautiful woman, still in the thirties, rose as she was announced, and stretched out her hand in kindly welcome.

At a glance her eye took in the slender figure, and high-bred air of the grey-haired woman before her; quite a different type from those who had hitherto applied for her situation.

"Your letter sounded so promising, Miss Grant, that I thought I would ask you to come and see me. I am devoted to my three little girls, and very anxious about their welfare, so I thought it best to see everyone before I engaged their services."

"Yes, indeed, Lady Worthampton, I am sure it must be a great anxiety choosing a governess, for it is such a responsible post," Marion answered, in a clear, sweet voice, that certainly seemed very fresh and impetuous for the owner of grey hair.

Lady Worthampton gazed at her curiously, and the girl felt herself growing red.

"You have, I understand, had no previous experience at teaching?"

"No, I have always lived with my father; we traveled about a good deal, and it was not until his death that I found myself compelled to earn my own living."

Here the voice faltered, and Lady Worthampton gave a sympathetic movement.

"But," she continued, "I have always been devoted to children, and I think I have generally succeeded in winning their affection. As regards the actual teaching, I do not fancy that you will find me inefficient."

* * * * * *

It is three months later and the London season is in full swing. Worthampton House is packed with guests, amongst whom is its mistress' brother, Capt. Lancelot Hardcastle.

The children are all devoted to Uncle Lance, and lure him up to the schoolroom on every possible occasion. But good as he has always been to them, his visits to them this time are more frequent than ever, for there is a certain mystery surrounding Miss Grant that he has made up his mind to fathom.

She bears a curious likeness to a girl, almost a child, whom he once met abroad in one of the smartest French hotels, living there with her father, and yet he remembered quite well, that Mr. Grant had told him that he had no relations living of that name, on one occasion when he chanced to ask him if some Grants he knew were any connections.

The governess moved like a girl, talked like a girl, but yet had grey hair. That she was not what she seemed, he felt quite certain, and today he had confided his suspicions to his sister, who merely laughed at him, and told him not to interfere with Miss Grant's private affairs. She and the children were very fond of her, and that was the principal thing.

"I know Molly, ask Miss Grant down to your fancy dress ball next week, and then let us see what we shall see," said Capt. Hardcastle enigmatically.

"Certainly, I had intended to do so; I am quite sure that Miss Grant dances beautifully."

That evening, after the children had gone to bed, Lady Worthampton went up to the schoolroom, and found the governess sitting by the open window, with her glasses off.

Instantly the door opened she sprang to her feet, and placed them on her nose, but not before the intruder had caught sight of a pair of exceptionally black lashed blue eyes.

"I have come to ask a favor of you, Miss Grant. I want you to come down to my ball next Tuesday, and if you will let me, I should like you to hire a fancy dress for the occasion, and send the account to me.

"And now comes the favor. I want you to choose whatever costume you like, but to let no one know what it is, not even the children, only myself. It is an odd request, I know, but there's method in my madness, and you know I am your friend," she added, laying her hand on Marion's arm.

The girl was too astonished to speak for some seconds. She had so longed to go to that ball, she was still not 19, and passionately fond of dancing.

"You are very, very good to me," she faltered at last, "and I should love to come down, but about the dress, I have some things by me that will do quite well."

"Then, that is settled; mind you do not tell anyone," said Lady Worthampton, as she waved good-by and went downstairs to her guests.

Marion had at once an idea. Was it possible by this means she might learn her own identity? She had three curious ornaments which her father had warned her never to part with. Heirlooms, he said they were, she would wear them on Tuesday.

As for the dress, she would wear her own beautiful golden hair in ringlets round her neck, while she would buy a large Duchess of Devonshire hat in purple velvet, with white ostrich feathers.

She had in her possession a dress of pure white silk, with a curious device in seed pearls, that had been her mother's and which with a little alteration, would fit her perfectly. As for the jewels, they were three brooches, composed of sapphires and diamonds, of remarkable beauty and design.

How she got through the day on the eventful Tuesday, she didn't know, even the children could not help seeing that she was excited about something, though they had no inkling that their mother had asked her to the ball, at which royalty was to be present.

Capt. Hardcastle told her that he knew she was coming, and wanted to know what dress she was going to wear, but his utmost entreaties only won the response, "a white one."

At 9 o'clock that night, when she was dressing a knock came at her door.

"Who's there?"

"It is only I, Miss Grant, may I come in?" said Lady Worthampton.

Marion felt herself in a dilemma; she could not refuse her kind employer entrance, but how would she take the deception of age she had practiced on her?

However, there was no time to think, for again came the voice:

"Please let me in—I won't tell."

Marion opened the door, and hastily retreated into the shadow of her room, in case anyone passing should catch sight of her.

"Miss Grant!" exclaimed Lady Worthampton in astonishment, as she saw standing before her one of the most beautiful girls she had ever set eyes upon.

"Oh, forgive me, I had to make myself look old; no one would take a young governess, and I really didn't deceive you about my teaching," she said imploringly.

There was a pause, and then Lady Worthampton spoke, as only one woman in a million would have been generous enough to speak.

"Child, for you are little more than that, I forgive you, for it is many a long day since I saw anything so lovely," and the elder woman took the girl's pure, beautiful face between her hands and kissed her, as if she had been her sister.

"No wonder Lance has lost his heart to the governess, though he has never seen you like this, has he?" she inquired, holding up one of the golden tresses in her hands.

"Not since I as 15," was the blushing response. "I remembered Capt. Hardcastle quite well, for he dined with my father one evening when we were in Paris, and I was still a child in short frocks; but he does not remember me," she added.

An hour later Capt. Hardcastle led the belle of the ball into the conservatory to rest, after her last dance with him. Marion, for it was she, had never looked so lovely; a pink flush was on her cheeks, the light of love in her eyes, and a joyous elasticity in her step that had been lacking ever since her father's death.

Half the men in the room were in love with her, and it was with a thrill of stately pride that Lady Worthampton noticed her brother lead the girl to a secluded niche.

"Marion, my darling, I could not wait any longer. You know that all these weeks past I have grown to love you. You know, do you not, dear, that it is Marion, and not Lady Marion that I want for my wife?"

"I know," answered the girl, raising might see the answering love of his own. "I know," she continued softly, "that you loved me as the poor, middle-aged governess; and, oh, Lance, I believe I have loved you ever since that night more than three years ago, when you gave me some chocolates, because my father would not let me go with him to the opera."

"My love, my little Marion," answered the enraptured soldier, as he folded her lovely form in his arms, and kissed one of her golden curls that lay near his lips.

"But, Marion, do you really not know what your father's title was; have you no clue?"

"None," she answered, "only these three brooches I now wear as heirlooms."

Scarcely were the words uttered than two men entered the conservatory, talking in low and agitated tones. On seeing that one of them was the Earl of Montague, for whom he entertained a strong dislike, Lancelot drew his betrothed into an alcove shaded by a huge palm tree, and laid his finger on his lips to enforce silence.

"I tell you, Casson, it must be the girl, how else could she have those brooches? You know they have always gone to the eldest daughter of the head of the house to come back to the family at her marriage, or the coming of the age of the daughter of the next succession.

"These brooches have been searched for everywhere. I know that my uncle had them in his possession when as left England, but so cleverly did he disguise his identity that we have never been able to find out what name he assumed. He may indeed be living now, for all we can prove to the contrary."

"And what is it your intention to do?" asked the man addressed as Casson.

"Do? Why, nothing; do you think that after all these years I intend to try and find a claimant for either the title or the money? I am not quite such a fool, my dear fellow!"

"Blackguard!" muttered Lancelot to himself, "you will have to sing another tune presently."

Marion had listened breathlessly, and when the two men walked off, turned to her lover, saying:

"Did they mean me?"

"Yes, dear, undoubtedly they meant you; those jewels are recognized."

"Then I am—"

"Lady Marion Montague. My darling, do you know what the world will say of me?" he inquired anxiously, as he drew her arm within his own.

* * * * * *

But little more remains to be told. Backed by Lord Worthampton's money, the lawyer soon succeeded in proving Lady Marion's identity, and Lord Montague had to disgorge a good jointure out of his immense income.

Directly the case was settled, Lady Marion Montague became the wife of Capt. Lancelot Hardcastle, and was presented at court on her marriage by her sister-in-law, Lady Worthampton, who lived to bless the day when she took a fancy to the grey-haired, young-voiced governess.

As for the children, they were inconsolable at the thought of losing her, and their aunt's visits were always looked forward to as red-letter days in the schoolroom.

Chances at the South.

In confirmation of the advice often given in these columns to farmers who for any reason desire to change their locations, that if they can find nothing that just suits them to the north or east, they had better, as a general rule, go south, rather than west, we notice in a pamphlet recently issued by the United State Agricultural Department, a comparison of land values in Mississippi and Illinois, Indiana and Iowa, showing that the average per acre of all kinds in Mississippi, including upland and river bottoms, is $17.79, while the average crop value over the whole state is $12.21 per acre. In Illinois the average crop value, $7.81. In Indiana, average land value is $45.66, average crop value, $8.23. In Iowa, average land value, $23.52; average crop value, $6.85. The variations of climate in Mississippi is 80 degrees; in central Illinois and Iowa, 120 degrees.—Country Gentleman.

In Corea two years of every three have 12 months each of 29 or 30 days. The third year has 13 months with 355 days.

MANY USES FOR SHEEPSKIN.

Extent to Which it is Employed for the Necessities of Life.

"Many people use sheepskin without knowing it," remarked a Salem manufacturer. "The warm, soft, furry rug in which baby is wrapped as winter approaches is of sheepskin, and so are the little pink shoes that are fastened on baby's feet. Very likely the little one's carriage is upholstered with the same stock, too. The boy holds up his first pair of trousers with sheepskin-tipped suspenders, and the snake skin or fancy leather belt that encircles the waist of the girl is only humble sheepskin in disguise.

"The woman who admires a purse from the skin of a 'dear little African monk' is only paying tribute to the same old sheep, and the man who fancies that his cigar-case is from the skin of the Arctic seal has only a small section of a Chicago slaughtered sheep in his hand.

"The society belle who slips her tired feet into a pair of boudoir slippers, or even Bangor moccasins, doesn't get away from the sheep, and the young dude who selects a moleskin vest for winter wear because King Edward wears one is only giving an order for more sheepskin.

"The college man enters the world with his sheepskin diploma in his hand. The Judge passes down weighty decisions as he sits on sheepskin upholstered chairs, and the lawyer rests opinions from sheepskin volumes. The traveling man bustles about with an alligator traveling bag, under the fond delusion that he is carrying a bit of the skin of the Florida monster, but he has still got that same old sheep.

"The pugilist puts on a bit of 'mutton' when he dons his boxing mits, and the youth who kicks the football about is only giving a boost to the sheepskin trade. Nearly every pair of shoes has a piece of sheepskin about them, and some are made chiefly of sheepskin.

"A number of the modern fashioned leather garments are also of sheepskin or are sheepskin lined. The sleeping bag in which the traveler in the Arctic or the huntsman in the woods crawls for a night's warm rest once protected the flesh of the same old sheep. The chamois skin with which the society girl brightens up her complexion in the morning is still the same old sheep. In fact, night or day, it is hard to get away from sheepskin."—Shoe Dealer.

Disgusted the Barber.

Four men stood in Cohen's cigar store the other afternoon talking with the proprietor about some baseball game that had impressed them as being probably the worst professional game ever pulled off, when a diminutive Frenchman entered timidly and butted into the conversation by removing his hat politely and addressing Mr. Cohen. The Frenchman's hair was tightly curled and he really looked too sweet for anything.

"Monsieur," said the descendant of countless generations of tonsorial artists to the cigar man, "you see ze curling hair of myself. Is eet not beautiful, monsieur? It gives one ze distinguished air, does it not, monsieur? Yes?"

"Sure, it does," replied Mr. Cohen. "You look too nice for anything."

"Monsieur would like to have ze curling hair?" inquired the disguised Parisian count persuasively. "If so, I make heem so. I make heem have ze beautiful curl like my own for little money. Am I to start, monsieur? Eet will take but a few minutes and will give you so mooch pleasure to feel yourself look so beautiful."

"Count me out," replied Mr. Cohen. "Curly hair dont' go in my business, although the greatest desire of my life is to have hair just like yours. Try the other fellows. If they consent perhaps I might have mine curled after theirs."

The polite son of Paris turned to the quartet of baseball enthusiasts. "Messieurs have such fine heads of hair. May I not curl theirs?"

The four grinned and looked at each other and then answered the Frenchman affirmatively in chorus. At the same time they removed their hats to show the hair dresser how easy his work would be. Every man of the four was as bald as a billiard ball.

The Frenchman gave one look and then made for the street. "Sacre, do all ze men of Seattle have bald heads?" he asked despairingly, as he turned the corner.—Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Her Mistake.

It is told of the witty old French abbe, Pere Monsabre, says the Liverpool Post, that on one occasion a lady sent a message to him just as he was entering the pulpit that she must see him. After much beating about the bush, she came to the point. Vanity was her besetting sin, and only that morning she had yielded to the temptation of gazing at herself in the mirror and thinking she was very pretty. Pere Monsobre looked at her steadily for a minute, and then, in his soft, musical voice, he inquired kindly: "Is that all, my daughter?" "Yes, father, that is all." "Then, my daughter, go in peace. For to make a mistake is no sin."

THE COMING OF NIGHT.

An artist sat before his easel in a large studio which looked upon a garden, and on one arm of the sea beyond the garden. He was a famous painter, and his name was great in the annals of art. He was no longer young, but the frost of age had not touched him; his hand was powerful, and his brain was full of fancies fair and glorious. What he loved best to do was to call back to the eyes of mortals the long-vanished faiths and myths of classic days.

The sun was shining on a canvas before him; on the canvas was stretched a figure of Narcissus leaning with enamored rapture over the deep, still water of the fountain. The beautiful nude youth stood ankle deep in hyacinths and ferns; a fawn gazed at him through the boughs of hawthorn; a stream from the hills fell down through mosses and stones and filled the porphyry basin. He knew that it was good—that youth was in it, though youth was no more in him.

Its outlines were all clear in black, and gray and white, but as he sat before it now he saw them but dimly—saw them as through a mist.

"It is dark early this afternoon," he said to his daughter, who entered the studio—a fair, calm, gentle maiden in the first rise of the blood.

"Dark," she repeated, in surprise.

"Cloudy," he said, with impatience. "It cannot be twilight, it is too early."

She was silent, a vague trouble creeping like a cold hand at her heart.

It was 3 o'clock on a day of April. He rose and put down his palette and brushes and walked to the great glass doors which led outward.

"Let us go down to the beach," he said to her. She followed him, a dim terror striking her soul, for she saw that the springtide sunshine was golden in the air, on the grass, on the sea. There were fine trees which belted the lawn on either side, leaving open the sea view.

"It is too gloomy," he said. "The trees must be cut; I have put it off too long."

The light was radiant; thrushes sung in blossoming lilacs; a little bark with a white sail glided across the smoothly rolling waves.

He walked across the lawn slowly, unsteadily. At the edge of the grass there was a fence of aloe and cactus; in the fence there was an open space to give access to the beach. He did not pass at once through the space, but stumbled against the sharp leaves of aloe. "These, too, are overgrown," he said, with impatience, and found the open space, angrily fumbling with his hands.

She followed him, voiceless from fear, fear of she knew not what. He passed on to the smooth yellow sand of the strip of shore which belonged to his land. The afternoon was cloudless, the tide was rolling in, a west wind blew about the silver turf, the little boat with the white sail ran before the wind. It was gay and glad as the songs of the thrushes in the hawthorn. He stood still awhile, his face set towards the water.

"Is the sea facing me?"

"Yes, father," she said, in frightened tone, for a rare terror seized her.

"Is the sun shining?" he asked.

"Yes."

The sun shining? Good heavens! What could he mean? The sun was still high in the heavens, and its splendor bathed in light the wide waters before them and the sparkling sands of the shore.

He stood awhile, his hands clasped behind his back. He stood looking, looking, looking. A sea gull flew above his head; he did not notice it, yet he loved those children of the sea and storm. He stood still a long time, as though in thought; then he turned and retraced his steps slowly, very slowly, as a man who feels his way by sight.

He walked slowly over the lawn and entered the studio; he stretched his hands before him as one who gropes through gloom. He sat down in his great painting chair.

"Turn on the light," he said to his daughter.

She, tremblingly, moved the button of the electric light. Its brilliancy crossed the sunlight.

"Is it light?" he asked.

"Yes."

He sat unmoved.

"What is it, father, dear father?" murmured the maiden, chilled by the ice of a nameless terror.

"There is light, light everywhere, you say," he muttered. "Then it is my sight which fails."

He bowed his head on his hands and wept.—"Ouida," in Chicago Tribune.

Most people overestimate their pulse, as they often count its beat when talking about the matter, and it is a fact, well known to physicians, that the excitement of conversation will quicken the pulse from 5 to 20 beats.

When a man thinks he owns the earth you are only wasting time in trying to teach him geography.

Women Don't Care to Vote.

In 1894 the first year women was given part suffrage in Illinois, 24,000 voted in Chicago. At the last election ten years after, only arolnd 1,000 women voted. To give them limited suffrage costs Chicago about $500 at election. The expense to the state is more than $3,000. In view of the decreasing use to which the women put the privilege of voting for university trustees, the question has arisen:

"Should women be disfranchised entirely on the ground that they do not care to vote?"

Short—Do you really believe there is any such thing as second sight?

Long—Well, I'm not exactly a believer, but I hope there is. Otherwise I'll not get a sight of that ten-spot I loaned you six months ago.

Mrs. Hogan—An' phwat will the little darlint be whin he grows up?

Mrs. Grogan—He shlapes thot swate at noight, we're afther thinkin' he'll be a policeman.—New York Sun.

The art treasures at Windsor Castle are said to be worth over $10,000,000. The King has had them rearranged, but has not been able to insure them as yet, owing to their great value.

He—"Really, dearest, do you love to have me near you?"

She—"You don't know how I adore your presents."